

Kalimpong

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The voice of the Darjeeling Hills

# Himalayan Times



## Khukuri

**ARE YOU GETTING QUALITY  
EDUCATION  
IN THE DARJEELING HILLS ???**

## PRASHANT- THE PEOPLE'S IDOL

By Sandip C. Jain

Only God (and maybe Sony TV) knows what fate has in store for Prashant. Maybe by the time you read this piece he, to the collective disappointment of the entire Hills, may be out of the Indian Idol title race, or maybe to the glee of his lakhs of well wishers and fan, he may still be there in the contest and on track to becoming the first Indian Idol from Eastern & Northern India.

Of course, if the sole criteria to become the Indian Idol was the collective aspiration of an entire community- there would have been nothing to stop Prashant from becoming the third India Idol- he would be a hands down winner. The entire Nepali community ( by saying Nepali community, I mean all the ethnic groupings in the Darjeeling /Sikkim region) has rallied behind Prashant like never before (well actually, I am a little wrong in saying that we have never ever before rallied so solidly behind any single person because the fact is that we did rally behind someone in the late 1980's, giving and sacrificing everything we had, in the hope of seeing a better tomorrow- whether the tomorrow was actually better or worse is a different story altogether).

Back to Prashant and all hats off to him for becoming that catalyst which has mobilized the entire Hill community into a path which was un-trodden hitherto. Whether he will actually go on to become the next India Idol or not is a thing of the future but as of now more than his achievements on stage, to me, his biggest achievement till date is that he has managed to get everyone in the Hill, irrespective of caste, creed, religion or political affiliation, onto a single platform. In my opinion this will remain his single

biggest achievement, probably even bigger than his win- that is, if he wins.

Frankly my opinion - which I know is against the popular consensus, is that based on the quality of Prashant's voice, his lack of mobility on stage and his lack of formal vocal training, it would be

quite a miracle if he won because of the simple fact that there are others in the contest who have had more training, exposure and experience in this field. His fellow contestants are much better prepared and groomed for the final assault. Well this is what my head says but then I was, am and always will be a slave of my heart and my heart is rooting for a

victory for Prashant and it has made me spend much time, energy and thousands of Rupees in helping garner votes for him (after all the responsibility of his campaigning in Kalimpong has been taken over by VISION KALIMPONG, which yours truly heads). Of course it is an uphill task for Prashant to actually win the crown but then I guess as long as we continue voting for him, he can remain an optimist.

But this article is not about his singing talents but rather on what did or how did Prashant actually manage to mobilize the entire community behind him. Surely there have been others before him from the Hills who have been equally if not more talented than him. Adrin Pradhan is a craze in Nepal, Sonam Sherpa is hero worshiped by Rock Music lovers all over India, Loui Banks is considered



**PRASHANT  
TAMANG**

the pioneer in India of the type of music he plays, Bharat Chhetri is arguably the best hockey goal keeper in India but non of them has ever managed to come even remotely close to the popularity Prashant has gained or the support he has received. My question is- Why?? What's your take on this?? My opinion is that it is due to a combination of several factors – the first of course being that Prashant is undoubtedly talented and the second is that we can identify him as someone from amongst us. The third and a very significant reason I feel is that certain companies and individuals have very skillfully managed to use the name of Prashant as a marketing tool. In the pretext of promoting Prashant they have very cunningly and skillfully used him to further their own personal interests. Advertisements wishing him success have earned certain publishers tons of money and several companies too now have his face on banners and posters advertising their products. His face now peeps down from almost every vacant wall in the Hills via these posters and all these have definitely managed to give him more prominence (and hopefully more votes). Certain individuals too have become leaders of the “Vote Prashant” campaign hoping to gain prominence and popularity at his expense.

The last but also the most important factor contributing to all the support he is receiving is the fact that Prashant's meteoric rise in the competition beating thousands of contestants nation-wide is being seen by us as a way of expressing our arrival on the National stage. Prashant is now the new vibrant and exciting National face of the Darjeeling Hills and its residents. This is precisely the reason why such a hullabaloo took place when Prashant was forced to wear that silly *darban* dress in one of the episodes. The entire Gorkha sentiment was badly hurt and rightly so. The message

we got was that Sony TV was trying to keep alive that particular false notion still prevailing in the Indian mainland that the Gorkhas are a community of *durbans*, liftmen and drivers. Actually I feel pity on such people who still brand or think of us as the above for the simple reason that it shows their ignorance of ground realities. Little do these people know of the contributions that the Gorkha community has made in the forward march of India. Stereotyping the Gorkhas as gatekeepers or liftmen by the ignorants in the Indian mainland is akin to branding all Indians as snake charmers and *fakirs*

by the ignorants in the Western Hemisphere. We as Indians laugh at them and then forgive them for still thinking of us as a land of snake charmers for we know they are ignorant. We as Gorkhas too laugh at all of those who still think we are a community of gatekeepers and have to forgive them for their lack of knowledge. Anyway we hope that Prashant wins even if just

to prove that we are as talented, as vibrant and as cultured as any other race living in India. The irony in history is that those races or communities who fashion stereotype and typecast others as inferior- themselves end up with eggs on their faces.

The ten million in Indian Currency, the swanky SX4 car, the various other contracts etc will only be Prashant's if and when he actually wins the contest but even if he does not win- he has nothing to worry about because the fact is that he has already achieved what no one from the Hills has ever managed to- he has brought us all under one umbrella, that too at a times when things were looking so rainy, gloomy and drab.

This, to me, will always be Prashant's biggest achievement....



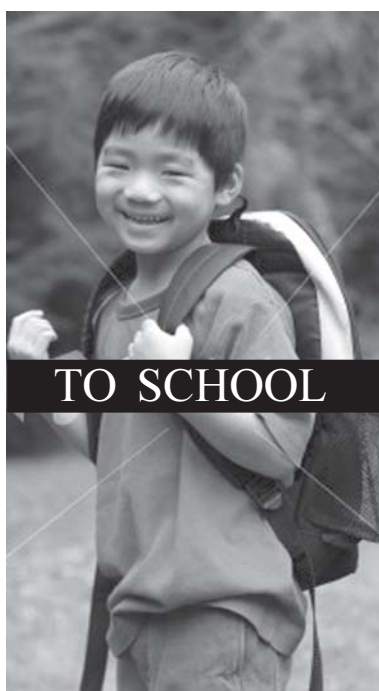
**PRASHANT  
TAMANG**

# ARE YOU GETTING QUALITY EDUCATION IN THE DARJEELING HILLS ?

(A RESEARCH PROPOSAL)

Dr. Dick B. Dewan

It was way back in the late nineties I had a hunch for doing one more research work in the field of education of the Darjeeling hills to make an assessment whether quality education of a desirable standard was being imparted in our educational institutions. Ever since then I have been harbouring a proposal to carry it out with all the earnestness. The prevailing situations of those days evidently demanded some amount of attention to be drawn for a judicious solution of some vital contemporary issues, *inter alia* education. It was then that the Darjeeling hills were enjoying the aftermath of the turmoil of the Gorkhaland agitation which was responsible for creating disorder and chaos in all the cognizable fields of our social life. Having now earned respite from the violence and disturbances of almost a decade in the eighties it was apprehended that a normalcy was restored in the life of the hill people for re-constructive plans and schemes as progressive steps. At this juncture, one may feel sore to recall that the brunt borne by the educational institutions was too great a casualty to be manoeuvred quickly as they apparently lost the very sanctity needed for their avowed activities of academic excellence.



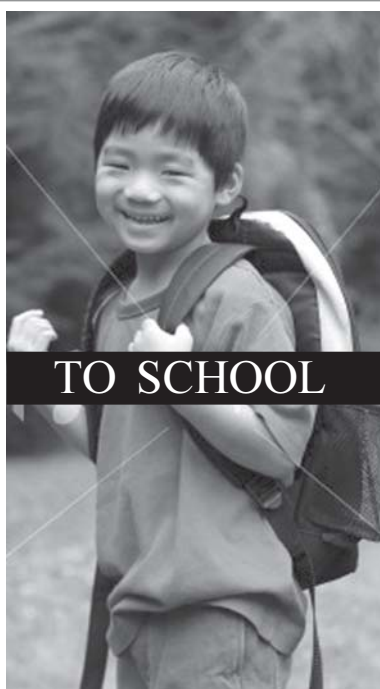
It doesn't drive home the point how those, in charge of imparting education in schools then, could afford to be invariably negligent of their entrusted duties. We were all up to enjoying the maximum advantages of the administration having gone lax – all to the detriment of the learners and achievers of our society. The so-called sensible elements supposed to prevail in educational institutions were rather dashed to the ground. By any measure, the devastation caused in the field of education in the hills was attributed to the agitation we had launched for separate statehood. This is rather a notion many of us still hold without any rational thinking or sensible reasoning. But to some serious observers, who happen to be really concerned, the deterioration or degeneration that crept in, may not have caused more by the agitation or any political movement than our own frail character. This is likely due to lack of ethical standard of the educational workers that our pupils are not getting fair deal and so they are lagging. A study in this regard is worthwhile as by now we should think that the ill-effects of the unrest of the eighties in the hills are long over and we have set our foot on the path of

development earnestly. We seem to lack the needful work culture miserably for which reason we have not come up-to the mark. This hunch may very well serve as the hypothesis for a research work that is now being proposed.

It has now been well over two decades since normal days are restored to be well set on the progressive direction of development. As my interest lies specially in the field of education I find it worth-while to make an assessment of our performances in schools and colleges. So, putting aside what damage the Gorkhaland movement has caused my intention has been to see whether we, entrusted with responsibilities in these educational institutions, are really proving worth of our salt or we have our failings too. This gives us an opportunity to see of what quality of education we are imparting against what should be the ideal standard of it. If teachers are really found to be true to their salt why is it that the taughts are doing miserably and what may be the reasons for their low achievements or poor performances. With this point in view a serious and sincere study is felt to be well-nigh necessary to make an overview of our behaviour for an exposure of stark facts. Such a venture may be expected to pay dividend to our educational activities and efforts. The scope of such a study demands a vast dimension and magnitude but the present study may be delimited to investigating only the quality level aspects as per the performances of the concerned teachers and the taught. The study will be based on the keen observations made, remarks and comments passed on

the explicit and the implicit behaviour of the teachers and the taught in schools mostly, leaving aside other aspects like departmental administration, governmental policies and plans, physical conditions like infrastructure facilities, furnishings, provisions and the like except for unavoidable references. It will not be rigidly a systematic in-depth and elaborate study intending to secure a coveted degree from a university. It will be just genuine recording of the teaching and learning behaviour of the clientele to reflect the present-day situation prevailing in the so called centers or temples of learning.

For a study as being proposed the schools mostly of State Boards will be taken up; however, the researcher may dwell at length and fairly widely on all those who have offered to serve or become the teachers and the learners. Although the particular area of study will be the hill-divisions of Darjeeling district yet the occasional references of Sikkim will frequently occur, as the nature of the present study demands, for reason that the population characteristics and the social environment happen to be rather homogeneous in this sub-himalayan region. Having taught in a high school for over four decades this researcher feels confident that enough needed information have been gathered as relevant materials to be used for analysis and interpretation. Nevertheless, he will seek due co-operation of all who are purposely involved in the activities of teaching and learning specially in a formal situation. The present researcher has been enriched with



the knowledge, experiences, opinion contributed and counseling supplied to him by some experts and active workers in the academic field. He has only to gird up the loins to move ahead with the topic(Title) finalized as follows :

A Study of Imparting Quality Education in the Schools of Darjeeling Hills with special references to Sikkim – Identification of Impediments.

As the title suggests this study may well reveal the true state of so called formal education being imparted in the schools of hilly regions. This gives a clear idea where we stand as compared to the rest of us. It will present a picture of our attainments, achievements or the dividend on the positive side and on the negative side our shortcomings, deficiency and failings which may bring about deterioration in our educational edifice and efficacy. It will be cautiously borne in mind, throughout the study, that – if the quality aspect of education is not enamoured the real fruits of education can never be secured. It is only a tiny minority of the privileged class children who get some sort of decent schooling but the rest are provided with poor quality education having weak infrastructure and inadequate pedagogic attention.

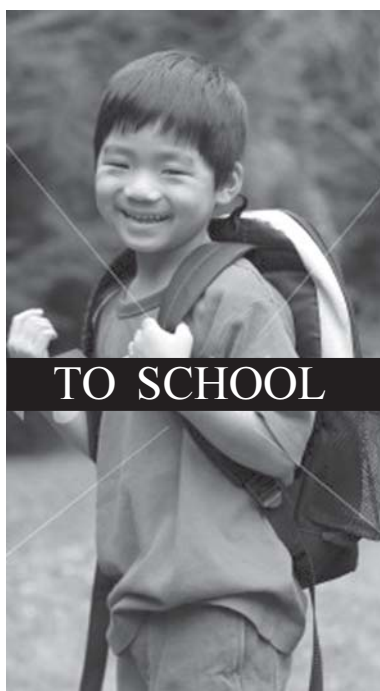
The proposed study affords a wide scope of even observing whether the exceptional children are getting fair deal. Meritorious may of course outshine whether with the help they get or not from their teachers but the laggards seem to have been left in the lurch. No school has any teacher to provide them with special care and succour if they are weak, in which case such pupils are found to have been neglected as condemnable goods. Are they not likely to be discarded and forced to drop out for rustication by such circumstances ? So called

meritorious ones go about with (having been awarded generously) so incredibly lofty marks. Don't you think such markings are sheer inflated and exaggerated in the mad race of earning name and fame by the different boards of education ? Have you not seen the so called toppers fail to prove themselves worthy of their exceptional scores in consistent manner throughout the course of their later on studies ? There have been cases of such candidates floundering and having met with frustration in mid-way.

It occurs to me that a research of this kind is worth its while and hopefully, many may be keenly interested in the kind of my work. I am as well fully aware I may rouse hornet's nest by antagonizing counterparts of my own profession. I feel awkward at times that I am defying my well-wishers who suggest me to look for some other problem instead I may cause inconvenience to almost ninety per cent of teaching professionals. I have been warned that I am likely to earn their wrath by venturing to expose their hypocrisy and even by divulging private secrecy of the profession. I may well ignore this view as I myself very much belong to that same teaching community of which I am an integral part. In no sense I will be held less guilty than those

who may be blatantly blamed for inaction or undesirable action of dereliction. My own shortcoming as a teacher will be reflected for having to share squarely the blame that goes to the teaching community. Sincere efforts will be made to make it a healthy scientific investigation affording to counter every bias or prejudice that may intervene.

May I rather look forward to all of you contributing towards making it a great success ?



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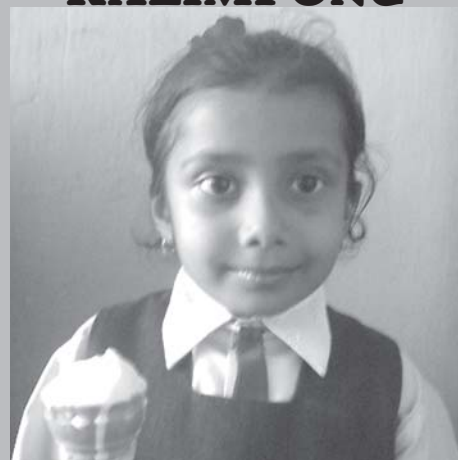
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## PICTURE OF THE MONTH



Children enjoying a horseride at Delo

## FUTURE OF KALIMPONG



Miss Reshika Singh  
01.08.2003

# khukuri

By Siddhartha Raj Pradhan



*"My khukuri self defense consisted of a strong offense of only three moves — a head strike, gut strike, or leg strike. I always looked into the eyes of the opponent because they seemed to tell me what he was going to do — perhaps lucky for me he always ran away. And, I conditioned my thinking to make myself to be willing to trade up — I would trade a finger for a hand, a hand for an arm, and, of course, an arm for a head."*

(KAMI SHERPA (ex-Gorkha veteran))

## ETYMOLOGICAL NOTE ON THE KHUKURI:

The word "Khukuri" has its root in both the Sanskrit word "Kshura"; as well as the Greek word "Kuron", both meaning "razor."

Phonetically, the spoken Nepali word can be broken down into 3 clear syllables:

खु कुरी

< KOO — KER (or, KA) — EE >.

[The stress should lie on the 1<sup>st</sup> syllable.]

The accepted version for today is now the globally recognized and acclaimed "Khukuri."

*\*For the general purpose of this particular article, I take it that "Khukuri" be categorized as an "authentic ethnographic edged weapon" which can be so defined as a weapon other than the standardized military model make; and is also likely to be a product of artisans who work according to traditional parameters, in traditional style of the culture producing it, for use within that particular culture, using related materials with ever evolving styles; as opposed to mass production.*

*\*The Khukuri is probably the most unifying emblem that binds all Nepalese irrespective of their individual nationalities, castes, creed or color. The Khukuri is basically an all-purpose knife of the rugged Gorkha hill people. It is a medium-length, curved knife, each Gorkha carried with him at work, at play and at war. All that is needed for the Khukuri to transform its' nemesis from a basic utility-tool into a formidable razor sharp weapon is skilled hands and the right (read, wrong) conditions (read, war).*

*\*The Khukuri has played a great historical role, partly because of the romance and the myth that is associated with its existence. The history of the present range of Khukuri is shrouded in mystery. This, adding to the enigmatic appeal that has projected the Khukuri to be probably one of the most deadly war-swords the world has ever produced.*

*\*The very origin of the Khukuri has been a topic of great dispute for a considerable time. The spelling of Khukuri has been documented in the British archives as:*

*\* Kookerie, koukooori, kukery, , khukri, kookoori, khookree, kukri amongst others.*

## HISTORY OF THE GURKHAS AND KHUKURI

Historical evidences suggest the precursor of the present day Khukuri, to the Greek cavalry's sword ('machaira') of the Cent. 4<sup>th</sup> B.C.; the design probably being copied from the early Egyptians sword-tool referred to as the "kopesh" or "kopis."

The Roman's later made innovative modifications to the prevalent Macedonian "machaira" and called it the "falcatia."

Later, a Cent.3<sup>rd</sup> B.C. sculpture shows a weapon ("kopis"), being downed by a Scythian prisoner-of-war, having a striking resemblance to the present day Khukuri.

It is only an imaginative conclusion that assumes the "machaira" to have traveled the distance, along with the eastern conquest of Alexander the Great; or maybe, even perhaps through the extensive use of the trade route-the Silk Route- that cut in from the Arabian peninsula into the sub-continent of India.

The Nepali version of the then evolved Khukuri, is supposedly been associated as an "all purpose knife", of the hill people of Nepal, especially the Gurungs' and the Magars' in the West and the Rais', the Limbus' (the Kirantis group) and the Sunwars' of the East; them culled together (by the British socio-anthropological historians) as the "Gorkha tribe", who are claimants to the present day Khukuri, who's use for it was for both domestic chores as well as for battle.

The oldest dated and known Khukuri, now showcased in the Arsenal Museum (in Kathmandu, Nepal), is said to have belonged to Raja Drabya Shah, King of Gorkha, of 1672. The museum also houses other Khukuris which claim to be over 450-500 years old too. From then to the present day, Khukuri has derived several offshoot designs ranging from the small version in the 8-10" inches to the massive 2-handed broadsword version, several feet in length.

The first well-documented account of the Gorkha tribe and the Khukuri comes from the Britishers' who having consolidated their powers over India by the 1800's were now advancing North towards Nepal. The military move of the British might towards Nepal in 1814 experienced something unheard in the annals of British warfare.

The Gorkhas' not only put up a stiff resistance, but also drove back the British troops. When the Britishers called in for reinforcement and yet again staged another attentive bid, the Gorkhas engaged them with unheard of jungle guerrilla warfare-materializing out of the jungle thickets, stealthily, suddenly and swiftly lopping off a



head or a limb and disappearing just as fast; posted sentries at the camp perimeters were found with their heads cleanly removed. Though the British troops were armed with modern rifles (with bayonets) and were not only a highly disciplined troop as well as being renowned marksmen, the Gorkhas armed with only the fear-inspiring Khukuri were a sight that jolted them completely.

A British account by Rev Wood confides:-

*"When we were engaged in the many wars in India, the Gurkha proved themselves our most formidable enemies, as since they have proved themselves most invaluable allies. Brave as lions, active as monkeys, and fierce as tigers, the lithe wiry little men came leaping over the ground to attack moving so quickly, and keeping so far apart from each other, the musketry was no use against them. When they came near the soldiers, they suddenly crouched to the ground, dive under the bayonets, struck upwards at the men with their Khukuris or Kukris, ripping them open with a single blow, and then, after having done all the mischief in their power, darting off as rapidly as they had come. Until our men learned this mode of attack they were greatly discomfited by their little opponents, who got under their weapons, cutting or slashing with knives as sharp as razors, and often escaping unhurt from the midst of bayonets. They would also dash under the bellies of the officers horses, rip them open with one blow of the Khukuris or Kukris, and aim another at the leg of the officer as he and his horse fell together."*

("Travels in India and Nepal": 1896).

The Britishers did yet another "firsts" when they sent in their emissaries to make peace with the Gorkhas. Treaties (with far reaching consequences, later on) were drawn.

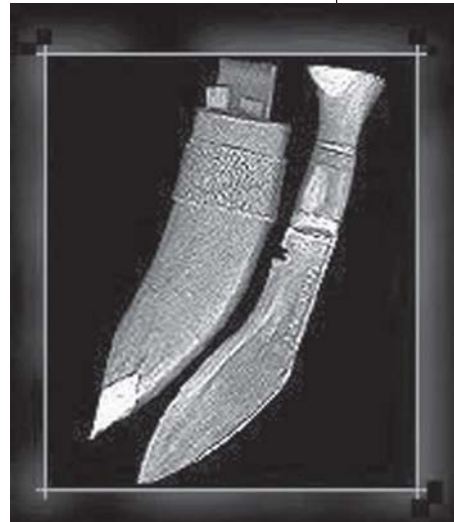
Since then, the Gorkhas have fought alongside British troops in every major engagement, including 2 World Wars and a hundreds of minor skirmishes.

The Gorkha are now considered to be one of the best mercenary forces the world has ever known, part of their fame came in from the deadly use of the Khukuri. Perhaps, no battle blade in the history of the world has more documented kills than the Khukuri.

The Khukuri infact acts as an extension of a skilled arm in the hands of a Gorkhali. In close combat situations, a Gorkha unsheathes his Khukuri and then makes his final finish of the business at hand.

The famous Gorkha war cry of: **"AAYO BIR GORKHALI"** ('the brave Gorkhas are upon you!!!').

With that, the Gorkha soldier menacingly makes his way towards them with the naked glint of the deadly Khukuri, sending shivers down the spines of the enemies. This type of psychological tactics has devastating consequences to the morale of the enemies. With a few minimal but fatal swishes of the Khukuri, the enemy tumbles, even before he can react to this extreme stimuli, the Khukuri has already silenced him to the 'kindest, quietest and quickest death."



The Gorkhas, though small in stature are large at heart, good natured with a keen sense of humor, accustomed to hardship, loyal till death, brave, disciplined as a contingent and absolutely devoid of any traces of fear. The very news of their impending arrival or the mere sight of this very troop, with their distinctively glinting blades, has more than once put an enemy to flight and quelled riots without bloodshed.

The Gorkha warriors stand tall with their legacies of war-exploits; yet the Khukuri still remains their fighting knife of choice. The Khukuri, along with the distinct tilted hat, has always formed an intricate gear of the Gorkha soldier. The Khukuri is mentioned as being an "official piece of equipment" for the Gorkhas as early as 1837.

**The Khukuri has played a great historical role, partly because of the romance and the myth that is associated with its existence. The history of the present range of Khukuri is shrouded in mystery. This, adding to the enigmatic appeal that has projected the Khukuri to be probably one of the most deadly war-swords the world has ever produced.**

In many Nepali villages, the Gorkha warriors still hand-make their own knives, a skill passed down onto the newer generations. To this day, the standard military issued Khukuri for the Gorkha force are individually handcrafted, taking at least 4 man-days for one Khukuri to be processed. No

machinery is used and needless to say, no two Khukuri are alike.

The blade of the Khukuri has a broad expansion that elegantly tapers down towards the tip- this provides a more lethal downward blow. This conception of the “forward-angled blade” underlines 2 basic premises:

- (1) Need for experienced and skilled workmen to make the Khukuri.
- (2) Need for experienced and skilled swordsmen to use the Khukuri.

The Khukuri makes for effective use, serving as a combination of anything from an axe to a machete. This makes it particularly ideal for an outdoorsman, a hunter, a hiker, a hired hand and of course, the soldier.

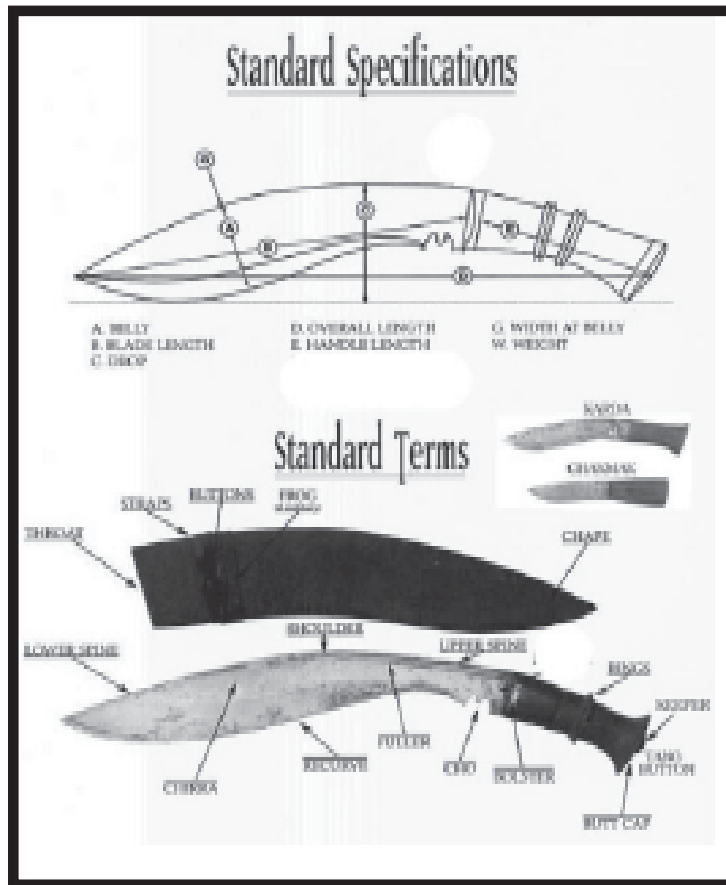
The Khukuri itself is carried in a wooden (often leather covered) scabbard. There are the 2 mandatory tiny knives accompanying it, tucked just behind the main stealth.

**‘Karda’:** A small utility knife, just behind the scabbard whose primary purpose is to cut smaller assortments and also to work as a skinning knife. The word probably is derived from the Persian root word “*kard*.”

**‘Chakmak’:** Small sharpening steel; to be used as a flint to make fire. This word is derived from the Turkish root word “*chaqmaq*”, meaning, “*splinter/s of light*.”

The Khukuri is shrouded by cultural hues and religious significances, adding dimensions of magic and awe into this fabled knife. Almost everything about it has some connotations attached to it... more importantly, scientific.

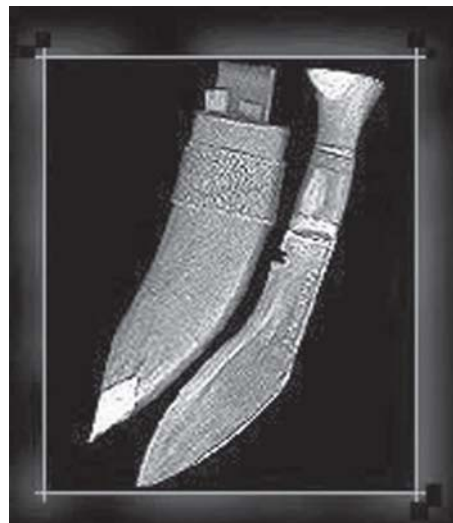
**‘Cho’:** The notch called ‘*cho*’ is an interesting part of the Khukuri, located near the handle of the edge of the blade; The name appears to be non-Nepali, is probably from a Tibeto-Burman language (i.e. Newari, Gurung, Limbu etc.) it symbolizes a Hindu fertility symbol (said to be the penis of Shiva; also said to be the vagina of Kali). It is also said to symbolize the horn of a cow/bull (it being a sacred animal in the Hindu religion) forbidding the user of the Khukuri to ever slaughter them. This also gives inkling to the Gorkhas never to use this weapon on either women or on children. The ‘*cho*’ also referred sometimes as the ‘*kaura*’ or ‘blood groove’ is



also said to be the trident of Shiva, the Hindu mythological God of Destruction. The scientific reason is that, the Khukuri being a lethal close combat weapon, the ‘*cho*’ (notch) is meant for the blood to drip and not to bloody the grip of the user.

**‘Pommel’:** The butt cap of the knife is often decorated with the head and monster motif of the “*Kirtimukha*” (Sanskrit for “*the face of glory*”, this demon is always hungry and is the protective deity of the Khukuri. Sometimes, the “butt cap” also resembles the “eyes of God”- “always watching, ever seeing.” Scientifically, the “butt cap” is the same length of the blade encased into the handle. The butt cap gives a firmer foundation so that the blade does not “fly” off when handling the weapon away from the handle bar.

**‘Dhaar’:** The basic curve is said to resemble the crescent moon, the symbol of an emerging Nepal. Only the concave-curving lower side of the Khukuri is sharpened.



**‘Chopat’:** The upper edge of the blade is left unsharpened and flat; it also constitutes the thickest part of the blade, adding needed weight for the “forward momentum” of the hand power.

**‘Chirra’:** The main groove running in the main body of the blade, this is used to decrease the weight without decreasing the strength of the blade. Though some Khukuri have no ‘*chirra*’, others may house multiple “*chirras*.” (E.g. ‘tin–chirra’ or the ‘3 grooved knife’). Some of the better blades will be hollow, ground in one (‘*ek*’), two (‘*dui*’) and sometimes even three (‘*tin*’) grooves.

**‘Ber’:** The grip is usually of the local walnut (‘*pat-pate/okhar*’) wood, chandan or sinal, and is fitted as one piece.

**‘Aunlo Bal’:** The secondary groove running along the upper spine; also referred to as the “blood-groove”, or the “sword of Shiva.” Also known as “*pwankh*” (feather), “*rato karang*” (red rib). The “*aunlo bal*” gives added grip to the finger for strength/force/energy in slicing the knife in the downward direction.

**Handle ring:** Traditionally made Khukuris usually have a number of ring/s at the center of the handle. The configurations of the ring/s are fairly rigid. All good “*kamis*” (traditionally, the untouchables or the low caste .The “*Lohars*” who form this sept

The Khukuri is probably the most unifying emblem that binds all Nepalese irrespective of their individual nationalities, castes, creed or color. The Khukuri is basically an all-purpose knife of the rugged Gorkha hill people.

within the Kami group generally make the Khukuri. The “*Lohars*” are basically specialized in the art of metallurgy, producing one of the finest knives of the world. It is the age-old and inherited experience that has been passed down through generations and their native skill along with blood, sweat, tears, patience, care and a pride of their craftsmanship that have enabled them to produce this outstanding weapon.) use the same configuration, but none know why they put it on the handle or what it might mean. (Bill Martino).

A plausible scientific explanation would be for the handler of the Khukuri to get firmer grip on the handle.

**Bolster:** The metal divider between the handle and the blade; also referred to as the “guard.”

**‘Daab’:** A leather or cloth sleeve over the scabbard sometimes adorned with cloth work or engraving and hilt made of bone ivory, horn or metal. It has a loop/strap to secure the whole unit to belt or a shoulder holster. The traditional scabbard is a wood shell wrapped in a water-buffalo hide, also housing the “*karda*” and the “*chamkmak*.”

The overall length of the Khukuri is measured from the tip to the butt cap, in a straight line, unless otherwise specified. However, the most important part of the Khukuri is the calculation of the 2 basic properties that all Khukuri, irrespective of their names, size, shape and weight have.

1 **Final Bend:** the last bend of the knife.

2. **Effective Striking Angle:** An imaginary line drawn from the end of the knife to the end of the handle.

Some Khukuri despite having an ‘aggressive’ Final Bend angle, may seem to be more “relaxed”; this may account why these Khukuri feel fairly comfortable, though heavy.

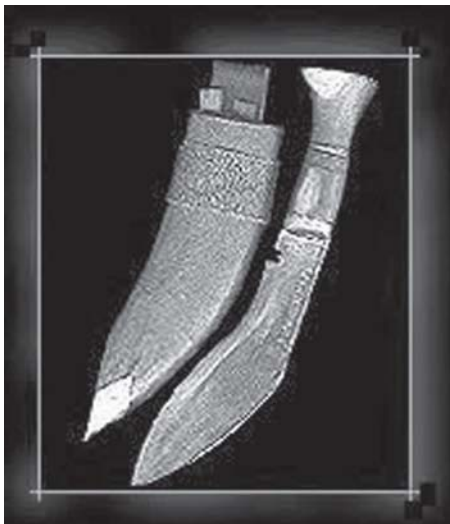


Careful look into a Khukuri on the space beneath the Khukuri will give one a “feel” for a good handle on the Effective Striking angle of the knife. A larger area usually translates into more “*bend*”. Also, the area can be weighed to the front or the back, which makes a huge difference in the hand.

A Khukuri is said to be the chopping extension of the dominant hand; not so much because of the weight of this, rather it requires much skilled techniques of hand strokes that makes it notoriously deadly at close combat situations.

The Gorkha generally strike upwards with the Khukuri, possibly to avoid wounding himself should his blow fail and possibly because an upward cut is just the one that can be least guarded against.

It is but, a dogmatic belief, that a Gorkha must draw blood to satisfy the need of the Khukuri before it is returned back to ‘sleep’ in its sheath. The Khukuri being basically a “utility-tool” of work, at home and on communal services such as hunting, skinning, clearing undergrowth, cutting wood etc. contradicts this maxim.



## Source:

- [www.himalayan-imports.com](http://www.himalayan-imports.com)
- [www.VikingSword.com](http://www.VikingSword.com)
- [www.nepalesekhukuri.com](http://www.nepalesekhukuri.com)
- [www.m4040.com](http://www.m4040.com)

## THE PARADOX OF OUR TIME IN HISTORY IS THAT:

We have taller buildings, but shorter tempers;  
wider streets, but narrower viewpoints;  
we spend more, but have less;  
we buy more, but enjoy less.



# Mr. Goray Douglas

\_\_\_\_\_ Nayan Subba

In the early 1970's one could see a fair and handsome man in a felt hat, tweed coat, tie and gray flannel pants with a pipe in hand gently strolling around the Mall. This gentle Hillman was none other than the internationally known artist the late Mr. Goray Douglas who lived with his family at Ajit mansion in Darjeeling. He was a resident of Miamo, Burma and had to flee with his parents during the Japanese invasion. He lost both his parents on the way and arrived at Darjeeling stricken with malaria. Mrs. C. Anderson a connoisseur of art who lived in Darjeeling was fascinated by his talent and helped him to re-establish himself. Though not formally trained in art and not helped by Burmese artists Douglas discovered his idiom early in life and gradually developed his own style of painting in water colours, pastels, pen and inks and oils. He was the only artist in the hills who was adept in the art of etching. His subjects were day-to-day workers like rickshaw-pullers, labourers, operatives or even beggars. In fact his much loved painting "The Old Man from Ghoom" was a tramp who came from Ghoom every Sunday to his house to receive his share of gratuity. In this painting he demonstrates his virtue as a skilled portrait painter. The painting has something very delicate and subtle and the mark of his resonance. He excelled in painting wrinkles as wrinkles can ever be. Another one of his masterpiece "Tibetan Child" a charcoal, was well appreciated adored and bought by Lord Mountbatten. The child

## SKETCHES BY GORAY DOUGLAS



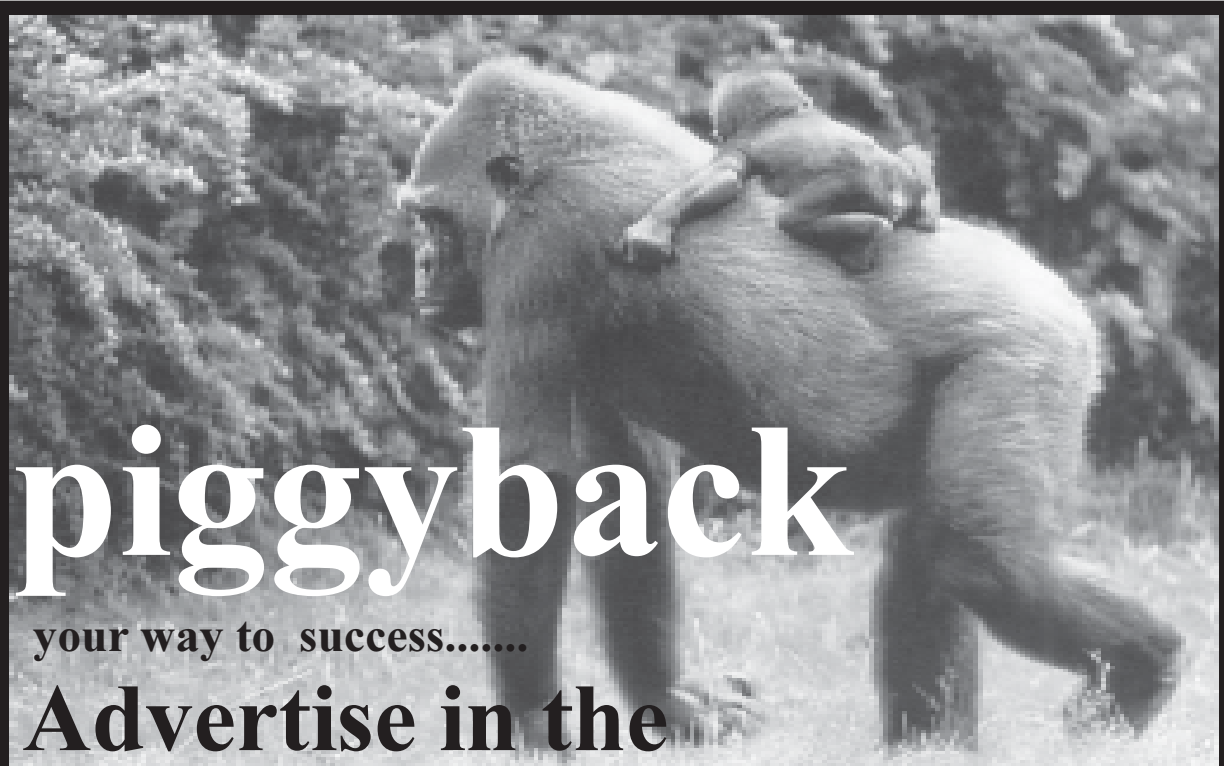
has a gentle smile, which attracts the eye, warms the heart and has a tremendous impact on the mind.

Mr. Douglas traveled throughout the world and held one-man exhibitions in most of the countries. Douglas lovers can see his paintings in all parts of the world. He painted some cover illustrations for books such as 'Aayo Gorkha' by J.M.Marks, 'Surgeon in Nepal' by Peter Pitt and the 'Lure of Everest' by Brigadier Gyan Singh. He married a fellow artist Dirpa Gautam of Sikkhim, who specialized in painting flowers.

In commemoration of his 30<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary 44 paintings were on display at the exhibition held at Heydan Hall, Darjeeling for three days from 26 12 2006 to 28 12 2006, 8 were oils, 5 charcoals, 5 pen and ink, 5 pastels, 3 water colours, 2 pencil sketches, one dry Brush and 15 Big Etchings exhibited for the first time. It was a refined exhibition with some fine examples of line work and human nuances meticulously reproduced. The charming Ms Dolly Douglas daughter of G. Douglas who lives at Ajit Mansion, Darjeeling with her son Sai Kishore a budding Telefilm producer had hosted the exhibition. David Douglas, son of late Mr. Douglas is also a well-known painter of this region. Reprints of Douglas paintings are available at room no 10 Ajit Mansion, Darjeeling and other commercial firms around Chowrasta. G. Douglas was a music lover and his favourite piano piece was "The maiden's Prayer." Years ago Dolly played the piano for me including the favourite of Mr. Douglas at her residence as well as mine. I used to think perhaps one day, before too long, this talented young artist would become an accomplished piano soloist, which sadly was not to be. A waste of good material.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 1976 Mr. Douglas without any sickness or warning suddenly died at his home while painting leaving his family members and friends stunned and bewildered. This celebrated etcher through a lifetime of etching and painting produced hundreds of pictures, which today is treasured by his admirers all over the world.

His 31st Death Anniversary will be remembered throughout the world by the people who hold him in high respect. His work has not gone unrecognized; whatever he painted they are evidence that his art today is a hymn to life itself. ■



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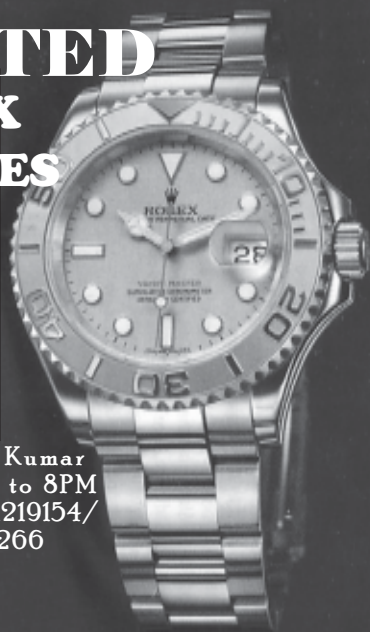
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# DARJEELING: WASTE MANAGEMENT

Malavika Subba

Darjeeling has a history, which starts in the later part of the 1800's when the colonial British developed her as a summer capital. She was not only developed as a summer capital but also as a centre of British interests in tea. It is said that when the British first landed in Darjeeling there was just 16 houses in the Darjeeling Spur. Today the town has grown beyond the core 5 km radius to an area of 7.83 sq km and extends from Jorebunglow to Ging Bazar with the population increasing at a steady rate.

The growth has been unplanned and the amenities developed in the 1930s are still used to cover the ever-growing population of the town today. In our vast still developing town in an average, 30 metric tones of waste is generated in Darjeeling daily. This average goes up to 45 metric tones a day in the peak tourist season.



## How is this waste managed and where does it go?

Individual families, commercial establishments and institutions throw their solid waste in bins, streets, drains, jhoras, open spaces and near by water-bodies. This has resulted in dirty streets and clogged drains leading to unsanitary conditions affecting overall health and environment. One of the factors for landslides is also the clogging of drains. Of course households do keep aside newspapers, bottles and metal objects for sale to *kabidiwalla*. Rag pickers also pick recyclable material from waste thrown in the bins, street and jhoras.

Although street sweeping is adopted for waste collection, the waste collected through street sweeping contains all types of waste and the tools used are inefficient. The secondary stored waste is also transported in an inefficient manner. Multiple handling becomes necessary and contaminated waste is also handled manually. The transport system can handle only 12 metric tones of solid waste, thus creating a backlog. This backlog causes serious health and sanitary problems.

The waste is manually dumped in the disposal site, and there is no scientific treatment of the waste dumped. Hospital, toxic and industrial waste are also dumped in the same dumping site. The solid waste management practice adopted today is unhygienic and unscientific causing tremendous problems of health and environment not only to Darjeeling Municipality but also people living down stream.

## OPERATION CLEAN DARJEELING, CLEAN RIVER RUNGEET – a new beginning.

Based on the analysis of solid waste management practices stated above the Darjeeling Municipality had adopted improved practices. The movement had been given the title of, “OPERATION CLEAN DARJEELING, CLEAN RIVER RUNGEET”. This gives a larger perspective of the movement, as not only is the movement directed to a cleaner Darjeeling Municipality but also a cleaner downstream River Rungeet. Till date, since the inception of Darjeeling, the waste generated has been dumped in the upper reaches of River Rungeet which eventually merges with the River Teesta. Thus, the contamination extends deep into the river basin, the consequences of which has never been analysed. The entire movement had been done in two phases. The first phase involved the entire process of cleaning Darjeeling Municipality Area. The second phase of addressing CLEAN RIVER RUNGEET needs more technological solutions and planning.

The improved practices that the Darjeeling Municipality has adopted however has an essential component of community participation.:-

**1. Street Collection.** Municipality Transport system needs to be revised to reach the community at designated time and the community dumps their waste at these designated times. Prior to implementation community meetings needs to be held to discuss the rationale and to work out the plan of action for collection. The transport system needs to be developed based on the area profile and the waste generated. Along with the expansion of the collection, segregation and storage at source needs to be promoted in order to facilitate composting and recycling.

### 2. Bye Laws

The processing of Bye Laws on Littering, construction waste needs to be processed.



### 3. Door to Door collection through NGO involvement.

In Ward Number 12 an NGO- HEAP, as of 15<sup>th</sup> August 2003, has been collecting waste on a door to door basis on payment. The project is novel and not only is it making Ward 12 cleaner but providing employment to 4 youths and most essentially is a pilot project for Darjeeling Municipality. The waste collected is being dumped at the Municipal dumping yard.

The experiments on door to door collection should be expanded based on the experience of Ward Number 12. The expansion should be done with the ideology of community responsibility and mobilization, employment and income generation and also adoption of scientific practices of segregation, composting and recycling.

### 4. Awareness and Capacity Building:

This expansion should involve awareness and capacity building programmes with the Community Based Organisations, Commercial Establishments, Institutions and Students. This is being done by Anugyalaya DDSSS and DLR Prerna two local non-profit organisations.

As portrayed above, 45 metric tones per day extra waste is generated during the peak tourist season. This needs to be addressed separately and should be done through a separate dialogue with hoteliers, restaurants and travel agents. The services provided to these commercial establishments should be on a pay on quantum generated basis. Commercial establishments should also include vegetable, meat and fish shops.

### 5. Recycling.

The feasibility of setting up recycling units for paper and plastic needs to be looked into. Till the day these plants are not set up, recyclable material can be recycled through the private existing set up in the plains. Due to the promotion of segregation the volume for recycling will increase dramatically.

Despite all these appreciable efforts no complete solution is possible especially with regard to **Bio-Medical Waste** as the present system of solid waste management does not have a proper treatment system. Bio-medical waste management needs to be treated in an integrated manner along with solid waste management.

Till the time an effective integrated system on solid waste management is devised no one can address the issue of bio-medical waste management from the perspective of harm reduction. The implementation of the Universal Safety Standards will ensure better health for the health practitioner as well as the larger community.

The practices that can be adopted are:

1. Segregation of medical waste
2. Treatment of medical waste (sterilisation)
3. Proper handling and storage of needles and sharps

All said and done it is upto each one of us to make whatever projects which are undertaken a success. After all each one of us has a right to a clean and healthy environment, don't we? **So what are we?**

- IGNORANT?
- INFORMED?
- KNOWLEDGABLE?
- WISE?



## What are our EXISTING ATTITUDES ?

- MY CLEANLINESS
- ROLL IT DOWN, OUT OF MY SIGHT
- WILL ACCOMMODATE SOME SMELL AND SIGHT
- BLAME GAME

## But the most important question to consider in this regard is — WHAT CAN I/WE DO?

- BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE
- I AM/WE ARE RESPONSIBLE
- SEGREGATE WASTE AT HOME/PRIMARY LEVEL INTO BIO-DEGRADABLE AND NON-BIODEGRADABLE WASTE
- REDUCE/REUSE/RECYCLE
  - REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF WASTE I/WE PRODUCE
  - REUSE CREATIVELY ALL POSSIBLE PRODUCTS I/WE USE
  - RECYCLE ALL RECYCLABLE PRODUCTS THAT I/WE USE
- COMPOST ALL BIO-DEGRADABLE WASTE
- BE A CONSCIOUS CONSUMER AND CITIZEN REFUSING TO LITTER AND USE POLYBAGS, PLASTIC CUPS etc.
- OFFER CHANGE TO OTHERS

We cannot alter the manner in which companies manufacture merchandise overnight, or put a complete end to the output of garbage but we can change our conduct to be more ecologically friendly, saving our resources for another day and stopping places from becoming merely hosts for our garbage. Darjeeling is the Queen of the Hills – Lets keep her that way!!

*(With special thanks to: Roshan Rai, DLR Prerna, c/o RCDC, Hayden Hall Complex, Darjeeling )*

You can contact us at

The Editor,

Himalayan Times

Post Box 49, Kalimpong

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voice of  
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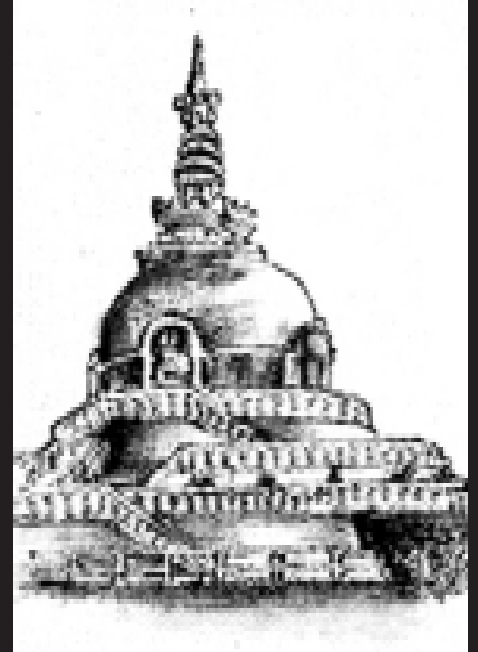
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## FACTS ON DARJEELING

Extracted from the Bengal District  
Gazetteer- Darjeeling 1907

**T**he Victoria Memorial Dispensary is the Darjeeling Municipal hospital. Besides the main building consisting 45 beds, there is a cottage hospital, as well as an infectious diseases hospital, and as excellent operating room. It is a model of what a mofussil hospital should be, it is gaining popularity every year, and is much appreciated by the people. More than 10,000 patients were treated at it in 1905 and no less than 389 operations were performed.

( Darjeeling Gazetteer 1907)



A sketch of the  
Peace Pagoda by  
Mr. Chedup of Darjeeling

## ANSWER TO JUMBLE PRINTED IN VOL 3 ISS 6

J	H	A	M	P	Y	A	L		A	A	R	I
	A							K				
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# BRAIN Teasers

With  
Suraj Mani Pradhan

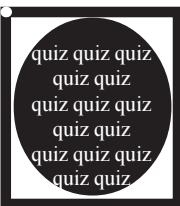


1. Name the person who was responsible for starting Tea Cultivation in Darjeeling in 1840
2. When was the Lowis Jubilee Sanitarium opened?
3. Dr. Grahams founded the Dr. Grahams Homes but he was also one of the earliest Principals of another school in Kalimpong. Name the School.
4. Which two young writers from Sikkim have authored the recently published book, "Khanhchendzonga- The Sacred Summit"?
5. In which school did Prashant Tamang study in Darjeeling?

## Answers to questions in the last issue

1. Amber Pradhan
  2. Sahid Durga Malla.
  3. Louis Mandelli
  4. The Darjeeling Planters Club
  5. Ajnish Vishwa Rai
- Winner: (Vol 3, Iss 6)**  
**Shivraj Chhetri**

Rush in your entries alongwith the coupon below to our office latest by 30th August 2007 to win a sleek Parker Pen.  
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# jumble

N	A	S	M	N	K	B	A	S	U	R	I	Y
O	S	S	E	W	A	S	A	D	A	N	I	A
R	H	B	L	R	U	N	G	E	T	R	V	G
T	B	E	A	R	M	Y	O	Q	Y	J	K	S
H	O	J	E	I	T	S	N	C	A	L	I	A
P	A	L	J	O	R	S	T	A	D	I	U	M
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T	P	N	U	P	O	N	M	C	J	I	R	I
W	M	G	D	A	L	P	A	A	B	I	N	A
A	V	E	R	R	O	N	A	L	D	S	A	Y
L	I	O	N	I	N	B	T	M	G	S	A	L
L	E	E	C	H	I	I	M	I	S	I	O	N

Hidden in the above jumble are the names of eleven local PLAYGROUNDS in Darjeeling, Kalimpong & Gangtok. You are required to find them out and send us your correct entry in a separate sheet of paper (please do not tear the above, you may xerox the above if you want).

Please send in your entry with the coupon given below by the 30th August 2007 to win a fabulous gift hamper sponsored by Himalayan Times (Nepali). The correct answers for the jumble published in the last issue is given on page number 18.

The winner will be decided by a draw of lots. The names of all those who sent in correct answers for the jumble in the last issue are Raphael Karthak, Sudhir Chamling, Vivek Singh, Tashi Topgyel, Girish Mukhia, Suman Ojha, Ramkrishna Sharma, Ongay Tamang, Sujata Rai, Nirmala Kalikoty, R.P. Rai, Gurash Thami, Daniel Chhetri, Sidharta Bista, Lalbhadrur Gurung, Sarita Dhimal, Dinesh Thapa, Mamahor Rai, Niraj Gurung, Bishal Lama, Sarika Pradhan, Ruchika Pradhan, Sunima Singh, Satbir Acharya, Sharmila Golay, Navin Thapa, Kavita Sinha and the lucky winner is-

**Vishal Ruchal of Darjeeling**  
Please submit your entry in a plain sheet of paper alongwith this coupon. Please do not tear this page to submit your entry.



jumble  
coupon

# KALIMPONG HAS ALWAYS BEEN SPECIAL FOR ME: KARISHMA

**Karishma Pradhan, the first Sikkimese girl to win the Sananda Dabur Gulabi Tilottama Contest, is a second year B.Com student in Pune. She took time off to speak to Sandip C. Jain while in Kalimpong to visit her cousins.**

**HT Karishma, tell us something about your background**

**KP** I did my schooling from Tashi Namgyel Academy of Gangtok. I was like any other girl from the Hills though I was really the very shy and introvert type of person. I never really interacted with people in a big way. Since my childhood I always had this dream to one day take part in a contest such as the one that I have just won but being someone who was so shy and being someone who could not open up easily in front of others, I frankly never thought that one day I would actually take part and win such a contest. Presently I am based in Pune where I am studying for a bachelors degree in Commerce.

**HT Then how did you actually gather the courage and what inspired you to take part in the Sananda Tilottama Beauty Pageant?**

**KP** Like I said I always dreamt of being in a contest such as this but it was Jyoti Brahamin, who had come to Gangtok after her success in The Miss India contest, who actually told me about this Beauty Pageant and gave me the encouragement and motivation to enter it. She told me about Tilottama Beauty Pageant being the biggest and most reputed beauty pageant in Eastern India and gave me tips and suggestions on contesting in it. Later, my father got to know of the details of the contest and managed to get me the forms and other details which he couriered me to Pune. That's how I entered this contest. Before this too I had taken part in other contests of this nature, one of them being the Miss Pune contest.

**HT What were your first reactions on being crowned the Miss Sananda Tilottama?**

**KP** When my name was first announced as the winner I was sort of numb and there was no reactions from within me. I was in a daze and as though under some sort of spell. It had still not seeped in that I had actually won the contest. I was confused and actually could offer no reactions. It was only after a while that it sank in that I had actually won the contest and that it was not a dream. It was then that I looked up into the crowd and saw my parents there. My first thoughts were to thank them and to thank God for all that was happening in my life that that moment.

**HT Being the only girl from the hills amongst the other contestants, did you really think that you would be able to win this coveted title?**

**KP** Well if I had not thought that I was capable of winning, then I would never have entered the contest in the first place. Definitely I had this confidence and belief in myself that I would be able to emerge victorious and it was with this feeling that I had entered this Beauty Pageant. I feel that its all in the mind, if you have the confidence, belief, determination and the strength of the mind then there is no reason why success cannot be had.

**HT Prashant Tamang has suddenly become a name which is on everyone's lips in the Darjeeling-Sikkim region despite the fact**



Karishma with the Sananda Tilottama Crown (left); with her Uncle & Aunty in Kalimpong (top); with her parents(right)



that there have been much more talented artists from the Hills before him. You too have been in the forefront of the "Vote Prashant" campaign in Sikkim. What do you think is the reason for the immense support that he is receiving?

**KP** He definitely has talent, loads of it infact. This is one reason for his immense popularity. Plus this is the first time that someone from amongst us is performing on such a big stage. We in the Hills can identify ourselves with him and he is making us all proud. The media too has played a big part in promoting him.

**HT** With Prashant creating big waves in the National Stage, with Karma Sherpa up with a good chance of winning in the Sa Re Ga Ma contest, with your success in this major Beauty Contest- all of which



have happened within a short span of time, do you think that the latent talent from the Hills of Darjeeling & Sikkim is now being recognized and accepted on the National Stage?

**KP** Well we in the Hills have always had talent, there is no doubt about it. Before us too people like Jyoti Brahmin have proved it. It was just that we were not getting the right kind of exposure. Now with the Media promoting local talent things are different and easier for the talent to be exposed. Our talent and abilities are now been seen by everyone in the country and being accepted by them. We are also now getting a lot more guidance and encouragement and I feel that now we have become much more confident and have the confidence

to match the best in every respect.

**HT** After winning this title, I am sure you must be getting a lot of commercial offers. I read it somewhere that you were not too keen on doing films etc at the moment, is this true? Tell us more about this.

**KP** No, it's not true that I want to stay away from films or a career in the Glamour world. At the moment, my education is a priority for me. I feel that studies are a must for everyone in today's world. I am doing my B.Com in Pune. As far as a career in Showbiz is concerned, I am already into it and want to continue in it. If I receive the right kind of offers, I will definitely take it up. I am already getting several offers from the Ad World, to become Brand Ambassadors for products, for modeling, for Ramp shows and several other offers but I do not want to do these at the cost of my studies. If I can somehow manage my studies alongwith a career in this field there could be nothing better. I hope I can, for the moment, manage both the things successfully.

**HT** Your Aunt & Uncle (Mr. & Mrs. Arun Pradhan who teaches in Good Shepherd Institute of Hospitality Management) live in Kalimpong – any special memories of Kalimpong?

**KP** Kalimpong has always been special for me. I come here twice or thrice a year and spend quality time with my Aunt & Uncle. I come to Kalimpong especially for Family gatherings. Family is very important and very special for me. This is why Kalimpong is so special for me. I have some very special memories of Kalimpong and they will always remain with me.

**HT** Any message to those from the Hills who want to follow in your footsteps?

**KP** Yes, all I can tell them is to have confidence in themselves and their abilities. Only if you have the confidence in your abilities will you be able to take on the world. We from the Hills have an advantage in the sense that people from the plains of India consider us to be a little different and think we are exotic; hence it's easier to get noticed.



**Have you realized how many different spellings we use for the different places in and around Kalimpong???**

**Of course Proper nouns can have different spellings but then there has to be one official one!!**

**How about coming to a consensus???**

**Tick mark the spelling you think should be the appropriate one and**

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TEESTA	TISTA	TEASTA
ALGARA	ALGARAH	ALAGARA
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## Review

"Dr. Sonam B. Wangyal is eastern Himalayan region's one of the most prolific writers in the English language. He has been a regular contributor to major journals like 'Himal, The Himalayan Magazine' (Kathmandu), 'The Statesman' (Nbplus Siliguri edition), 'Himalayan Times' (Kalimpong) and numerous other journals, souvenirs, directories and related materials. Besides his recent successful book on Sikkim and Darjeeling this collection of some of his essays is a wonderful reading that generates humour, sadness, surprise and occasionally ever manages to startle the reader. I thoroughly enjoyed it from the page to the last."

Buddhiman Yonzon  
Central Committee Member  
All India Nepali Bhasa Samity Bharatiya Nepali Rastriya Parishad

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Many words that describe different profession come to us from distant lands and despite having Nepali alternatives for most of them we depend on the foreign substitutes. Can you ever, in the normal course of a conversation, think of substituting 'sir' for a schoolteacher with 'adhyapak', 'updeshak', 'talimayjyu', 'guruji', 'panditji', 'gyandate', 'dikshak', 'pathak' etc. it is not just difficult but nigh impossible. Just the other day I was reading a book by Professor Ramlal Adhikari, Head of the Nepali Department, Government Collage, Darjeeling, and in one six and a third page essay, Asankhya Santanka Fatherka Deshbatta, he had used over fifty English words. English is that pervasive and excluding some exceptional cases there is little point in trying to examine English words in the Nepali language. Consequently, we will not dissect English words or terms like doctor, professor, pilot, engineer, nurse, hero, receptionist, manager, superintendent, liftman, contractor, compounder, night guard, bearer and the likes for they are all dal-bhat to us and we will scour words that are spicier, more zesty and from outside the colonial influence. And in this case it is people with the less envied professions that give us the scope and the satisfaction with some terms worthy of investigation. What comes to my mind immediately is the word 'durwan'. It is jokingly said that India and Britain took so many of the able-bodied Nepalis, to fight and defend their lands, that they were able to from eleven Gorkha Regiments and in anger Nepali felt that they might as well take the rest. So the 12<sup>th</sup> Gorkha Regiment, the 'durwans' defend the properties of the affluent in the Indian cities. The word is Persian pronounced variously as 'darwan' or 'darbar' meanng a doorkeeper. What amazes me is that we have our options in the form of 'dhokay', 'dwaray', 'dwarpal' and 'dwar-rakchak' and yet.....another Persian word in our language is 'mehtar', the sweeper and scavenger, which is an offshoot of 'mihtar'. The Persian occasionally resorted to infuse a bit of irony in their words denoting humbler professions and so 'mihtar' also means a great dignitary or a pince. Similarly, the domestic tailor was called 'califa' or a vice-regent. The roots to the terms 'nokar' and 'chakar' for servants are also Persian. We normally call a single servant 'nokar' and a group of servants 'nokar-chakar' and considering the Persian meaning we are almost correct. Almost? Yes, because there is a subtle difference in that the Persians call a superior servant e.g. the accountant, the valet, the private titor, the personal attendant etc. a 'nokar' and the menial workers like the dishwasher, stable groom, the sweeper etc. a 'chakar' and when suggesting the whole group the term 'nokar-chakar' was used. While referring to a goldsmith we are fond of the word 'sunar' but another term, 'sarafee' is also used to denote this prfrrsion, although Parasmani's dictionary makes the latter to be, more specifically, a dealer of gold and silver in the sense of a banker and not necessarily a goldsmith. The parent word in this case is the Arabic 'ashrafee' meaning noble and the word was used to mean a gold coin in contrast to the less noble silver or bronze coins. The Arabs have also given us the word 'saees' adapted from the English syce which was originally 'sais' meanings a groom for horses or a stableman. While 'saees' retained its original Arabic meaning, 'Khalasi', the Arab tent pitcher, became an assiatant to a taxi/truck driver. The word 'raj-mistri' is a curious one for there is nothing royal (raj) about his job. The wod 'mistri' is a deviation of the Portuguese 'mastre' implying a foreman or a master-craftman and to this was added the Persian 'raz' denoting a mason o a brick-layer. Finally, let us scan that despised but ever so useful 'coolie'. The exact etymology is uncertain but there are pointers that it originally referred to a tribe, Koli, that lived in western India and were hired to do non-skilled works like carrying mud, bricks, wood etc. later the name became a term to designate a profession. What makes it difficult to come to definite conclusion is the fact that in Tamil they have a word 'kuli' suggesting hire or wages. Furthermore in the Turkish we also have 'kol' denoting a slave and surprisingly the Tibetan pejorative prefix 'khol-' also signifies a slave (kholdan, a slave; kholpo a male slave; kholmo a female slave)■



This photograph taken on 15th of August 1948 is of a scene of Main Road on Independence Day. The photograph has been taken from Damber Chowk. The white building is the Kaluram building while the wooden building in the foreground is the present day Jopa complex.

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## ON THE CONTRIBUTORS

Dr. Dick B. Dewan

Is a Pedong based teacher who is highly regarded as scholar. He authored the highly informative book "Education in The Darjeeling Hills".

Siddhartha Raj Pradhan

is an eco-in-tourism professional and a research-journalist in the Himalayas

Dr. Sonam B. Wangyel

Is a Jaigoan based doctor who is acknowledged as an authority on the history of the region.

Mr. Saikishor

Is the Coordinator of Himalayan Times in Darjeeling.

Suraj Mani Pradhan

Is a teacher of Rockvale Academy and the biggest name in quizzing in the district.

Nayan Subba

Is a retired Police Officer who is acknowledged as one of the best contemporary writers in the Darjeeling region.

Malavika Subba

Is a Darjeeling based writer who is a teacher in North Point College.